



Housing Plan Implementation Committee

Date: September 2, 2021
Time: 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Location: Conducted via remote participation

Attendees

Committee: Ben Bradlow, Karen Kelleher, Jonathan Nyberg, Patricia Worden

Staff: Erin Moriarty

Guests: Len Diggins, Judi Barrett, Alexis Lanzillotta, Eugene Benson, Mariann Donovan, Rebecca Gruber, Jo Anne Preston, Don Seltzer

DRAFT Minutes

1. Housing Plan

a. Needs Assessment – Presentation from Barrett Planning Group

Judi Barrett of Barrett Planning Group gave a presentation on the recently completed draft of the Housing Needs Assessment for the Arlington Housing Plan.

Jonathan addressed the hesitancy to change in Arlington. Ben suggested a comparison to the labor market in addition to zoning to address the working, daytime population of Arlington unable to afford a home in Arlington. Patricia requested evidence on certain portions of the Needs Assessment including redlining, 40B, and the notion that increasing density could increase affordability.

Meeting guest Jo Anne Preston requested more information on the existing public housing of Arlington be included in the Plan. The Plan could address the need for continued maintenance and capital improvements to modernize public and low-income housing. Importantly, a high percentage of public housing residents are of a minority status and the Plan should support this demographic as the Town has indicated its intent to do so in previous Plans. Karen agreed an assessment of public housing and the usage of vouchers would be helpful in the Needs Assessment.

Judi introduced the Comments Resolution Matrix (CRM) to the committee as a means to capture questions, comments, and suggested edits to the draft Needs Assessment document. The committee agreed that two weeks was sufficient review time and staff requests all CRMs to be returned by September 16th.

Ben requested that towns/cities with different demographics be included in the comparison data points and/or maps of the Needs Assessment for a more holistic picture of where affordable housing is located in the Greater Boston area. Patricia reiterated that the quality of life in any city or town is very dependent on zoning.

b. Update on Community Engagement

Meeting in a Box – The Town has received several responses from residents that have hosted “meetings in a box” for the Housing Plan. Staff will continue to collect responses and share them with the consultants; however, new forms of engagement will be rolled out as the 2nd Community Forum approaches and a new phase of the planning process begins.

Farmer’s Market – Staff continues to engage with residents at the Arlington Farmer’s Market to discuss ongoing plans, promote upcoming meetings, and answer any questions.

2nd Community Forum – The 2nd public forum for the Arlington Housing Plan is planned for September 14th from 6:30-8PM on Zoom. The meeting format will include a presentation from Barrett Planning Group, facilitated small group discussions, and time for question and answer. Meeting details can be found on the Town’s website.

Barrett Planning Group gave the committee an overview of the agenda for the Community Forum as well as a brief description of the upcoming mapping activity that will be posted to the Town website following the forum. This forum is an important step towards drafting the goals for the Housing Plan and the next five years.

- c. Next Steps – The committee is requested to submit comments to Erin Moriarty on the Needs Assessment using the CRM by September 16th.

2. Announcements/Reminders

- a. The Town is hosting a forum on the ARPA framework Thursday, September 9 at 7pm. An introductory video from the Town Manager as well as memos from Department heads and the meeting details are available on the Town’s website under News.
- b. Karen shared the concept of a public forum that is in the planning stages to host a conversation around affordable housing. Developers of recent affordable housing projects will be invited to speak on the financing, planning, permitting, affordability, and occupancy of recent projects in the region. The Housing Corporation of Arlington will be invited to speak to their recent projects as well. The forum format is expected to include case studies, discussion, and Q&A to be scheduled this fall.

3. Minutes from July 1 and August 5

- a. Review and approval of minutes was postponed due to quorum issues as committee members departed the meeting early. Patricia requested that Len be removed from the list of committee members because Len is not a member of the committee.

4. Discussion/Open Forum

- a. No further comments were brought forward.

Patricia motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned 9:00PM

Upcoming Meetings: October 7, November 4, December 2